

CONFIDENTIAL

10. Comments of the DCI at the OS Staff Meeting, 30 January 1975

Mr. Kane advised that he had invited the Director to speak at this staff meeting because he felt it was important that our people hear firsthand from Mr. Colby his reactions to the current situation involving the various investigations of the Agency.

The Director indicated his understanding and sympathy for the Office of Security because of the increased workload imposed by the current investigations of the Agency and expressed his appreciation for the support the Office of Security has been providing during these trying times. He stated that although the Watergate investigation had been bad enough and had created considerable problems for us, the current investigation will be even more sweeping and we will have to demonstrate to both sympathetic and unsympathetic elements that intelligence has a role in American society and that the Agency knows how to do its job.

The Director is confident that the Agency will emerge from the current situation in good shape. Although the investigation may find some "soup on our ties," the ultimate result will be an increased understanding of the role of

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 2005/12/23 : CIA-RDP83-01042R000300010025-2

intelligence and a greater respect on the part of the public for the people who are engaged in intelligence.

One problem the Director foresees is the reconstruction of past environments which provided the rationale and a justification for some of our activities. While such activities appeared to be appropriate in 1955, they may not appear to be so appropriate in 1975. If we are able to explain these activities in the tenor of the times in which they took place, it will be much easier for our critics to comprehend why they occurred. One example cited by the Director was the coincidence of the initiation of the program in CI Staff concerned with dissident groups and the establishment by the President of Commission on civil disorders. To explain the atmosphere in which these activities took place we must search our memories and look beyond the bare facts as they appear on paper.

The Director provided some reassurance that nothing in the present affair would justify legal action being taken against any of our people. Although some matters have been referred to the Attorney General and while some people may have to explain certain things before Congressional committees, he does not believe there will be any court proceedings against employees. The Director will make every effort during the course of the investigations to keep the names of our people, both sources and staffers, from being made public. For example, the Director cited an arrangement with the Rockefeller Commission whereby identification numbers will be used in lieu of true names. Attempts will be made to work out similar arrangements with the committees. The Director pointed out, however, that just because names may not be mentioned publicly, it does not mean that our people may not have to talk to investigators from the committee.

One question which the Director anticipates will be raised during the investigation which has a direct bearing on the Office of Security is "Why not let the FBI conduct (background) investigations for CIA?" His answer to this will be that only CIA has the capability to conduct investigations where CIA or U.S. Government interest is not to be divulged. The Director believes this question is indicative of the scope and depth which the investigation may develop and he anticipates that the investigation will encompass much more than the investigators initially intend.

Approved For Release 2005/12/23 : CIA-RDP83-01042R000300010025-2

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 2005/12/23 : CIA-RDP83-01042R000300010025-2

The Director's approach during these inquiries will be to attempt to impress the investigators as to what intelligence is all about in these days--what it means to our country and to the peoples of the world. Secondly, he will speak to the organization of intelligence within the U.S. Government. Lastly, he will have some suggestions for improvement of the intelligence machinery. For example, additional outside supervision by such elements as the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and committees of Congress may well be warranted; a more precise definition and limitation of the responsibilities of the Agency needs to be created, probably through new legislation; and legislation needs to be enacted to provide better protection to our secrets. In regard to the last item, the Director pointed out that Marchetti and Agee may have done us a favor by demonstrating that you cannot run an intelligence agency if its employees are permitted to tell everything they know after leaving its employment.

In response to a question regarding proposed legislation which includes a provision that nothing in the proposed amendments to the National Security Act will prohibit the Agency from conducting personnel investigations of Agency employees and applicants or for providing protection to its own installation and information, the Director advised that this provision was put in by Mr. Nedzi, Chairman, Subcommittee on Intelligence, House Armed Services Committee, who understood and accepted the Director's position that we must be able to conduct our own investigations to insure the loyalty of our employees. He went on to state that he anticipates additional legislation will be forthcoming which will make very clear what our role is to be.

In regard to the implications of proposed legislation which would require reports to appropriate committees of Congress regarding certain types of actions undertaken by the Agency outside the normal intelligence activity, the Director commented that Congress, as a result of the Watergate situation, is sensitive to the fact that they have a problem of leakage of information. The Director believes this will be a problem for us as well, but there

Approved For Release 2005/12/23 : CIA-RDP83-01042R000300010025-2

CONFIDENTIAL

is an understanding at both ends that a problem exists and all parties involved will work for a solution.

The Director was asked for his observations on the implications for the Agency of the Privacy Act and the Freedom of Information Act. On Privacy, he indicated that the Agency has a fairly broad exemption and that he had recently told Congress that we need no further exemption than that which will permit us to protect sources and methods. With regard to Freedom of Information, he expects that in a short time our experience factor will show that the Government cannot operate under the provisions of this act. He believes Congress may now be aware that they "went over the edge" with this legislation and that they may be amenable to providing some relief in the near future.